Justifying the Inclusion of Organizational Theory and Behavior (OTB) in PhD Programs in Educational Leadership and Policy (ELP)

Nwachukwu Prince Ololube a*

ª Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Nigeria.

Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analyzed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

Review Article

ABSTRACT

This literature focused on an emerging construct in justifying the inclusion of organizational theory and behavior (OTB) in PhD programs in educational leadership and policy (ELP), and comparing this construct in relation to the rationale for inclusion, key organizational theories and behaviors for leadership and policy, and the benefits of organizational theory and behavior to PhD graduates that share a common concern in the dimension of effective leadership and policy in organizations. Drawing broadly from the interconnections and intersections of the organization theory and behavior literature, I offer a justification about the qualifications and benefits of OTB in ELP programs. The study likewise identified the concerns and questions to be addressed in the future and discuss their implications for research, leadership and practice. The present review indicated that OTB remains largely beneficial by offering insights into the evolution, functioning, process,

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*Corresponding author: E-mail: nwachukwu.ololube@iaue.edu.ng, ololubenp@gmail.com;

progress, and research opportunities for new discoveries in leadership and policymaking to improve organizational effectiveness. Effective integration of organizational theory and behavior enhances graduate outcomes and preparing them to handle organizational challenges as future leaders and policymakers.

1. INTRODUCTION

Organizational theory and behavior is a discipline that provides insights into how businesses and organizations function, and how they develop and adapt to changes in the external environment. It is an essential and a major field of study for managers and leaders that want to improve their organizational function, processes, structures and strategies to attain success. As such, the inclusion of organizational theory and behavior in PhD programs in leadership and policy is essential for the cultivation of comprehensive knowledge, function, process, progress, and responses to their environments to create expertise in these fields. Organizational theory and behavior provide a foundational understanding of organizational dynamics, structures and processes that enables leaders and policymakers to effectively navigate complex environments (Arkansas State University, 2023). To Ololube (2024), by understanding the dynamics of organizational theory, graduate students, managers and leaders are offered valuable information to improve efficiency, effectiveness and performance.

As a major paradigm in leadership and management, organizational theory explains how organizations are structured and how these structures affect behavior. Key concepts include organizational design, culture, and the relationships between various elements within an organization. According to Northouse (2007), organizations can be viewed through various lenses, including classical, human relations, contingency, and systems theories.

Classical theories, such as those proposed by Henri Fayol's 14 principles of management (see Rodrigues, 2001) and Max Weber's (1908) bureaucratization and rationalization emphasized the organizational hierarchical structures, clear roles, and established procedures. These frameworks offer insights into how organizations can achieve efficiency and control. However, they often overlook the human element, which leads to the emergence of human relations theories. These theories underscored the importance of interpersonal relationships, motivation, and employee satisfaction for achieving organizational goals.

Contingency theory introduced the idea that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to organizational structure and the most effective structure depends on various external and internal factors, including the environment, technology, and organizational size. This perspective encourages leaders to adapt their strategies based on situational demands, promoting flexibility and responsiveness (Shala et al., 2021). Therefore, understanding organizational behavior involves analyzing how individuals and groups behave within an organizational context. This field draws on psychology, sociology, and anthropology to illuminate how factors such as leadership, communication, group dynamics, and organizational culture influence behavior.

Leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping organizational behavior. Different leadership styles—transformational, transactional, and situational affect how employees engage with their work and with each other. Transformational leaders inspire and motivate, fostering a culture of innovation and change, while transactional leaders focus on structure and performance. Understanding these styles enables principled leaders to cultivate environments that maximize productivity and employee satisfaction (Ololube, 2018a).

Communication is another vital component of organizational behavior. Effective communication promotes collaboration, reduces misunderstandings, and enhances decision-making processes. Leaders who prioritize open lines of communication create cultures where feedback is encouraged, contributing to a more engaged and motivated workforce (Musheke & Phiri, 2021; Jerab, 2024; Bucăţa & Rizescu, 2017). Organizational culture in the context of
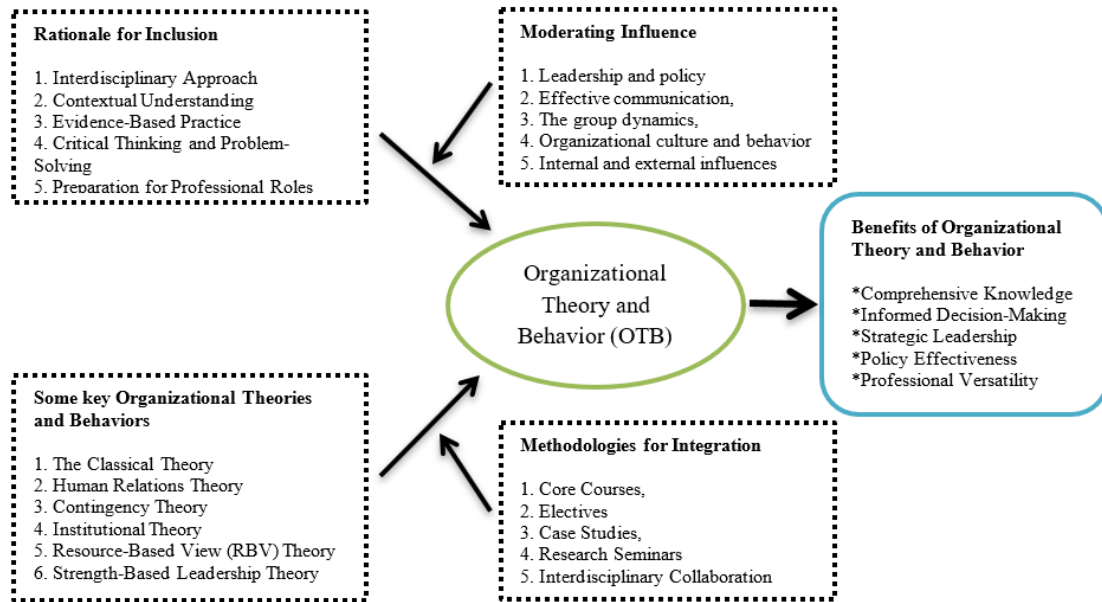
Rationale for Inclusion

1. Interdisciplinary Approach
2. Contextual Understanding
3. Evidence-Based Practice
4. Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving
5. Preparation for Professional Roles

Moderating Influence

1. Leadership and policy
2. Effective communication,
3. The group dynamics,
4. Organizational culture and behavior
5. Internal and external influences

Organizational Theory and Behavior (OTB)

Benefits of Organizational Theory and Behavior

*Comprehensive Knowledge
*Informed Decision-Making
*Strategic Leadership
*Policy Effectiveness
*Professional Versatility

Some key Organizational Theories and Behaviors

1. The Classical Theory
2. Human Relations Theory
3. Contingency Theory
4. Institutional Theory
5. Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory
6. Strength-Based Leadership Theory

Methodologies for Integration

1. Core Courses,
2. Electives
3. Case Studies,
4. Research Seminars
5. Interdisciplinary Collaboration

Fig. 1. Summary of review and justification

this work is defined as the shared values, beliefs, and norms within an organization, which significantly impacts behavior and performance. A strong, positive culture can enhance employee commitment, drive performance, and facilitate change. Conversely, a toxic culture can lead to disengagement, high turnover, and resistance to change. Leaders must understand the existing culture before implementing changes. Cultural assessments, which include surveys and interviews, can help identify areas that require attention. Strategies for cultural change often involve clear communication, aligning organizational practices with desired values, and involving employees in the change process.

In today's fast-paced and globalized environment, organizations face numerous challenges like technological advancements, economic fluctuations, and the shifting social expectations. Therefore, leaders and policymakers must navigate these complexities with agility and foresight. Organizational theory and behavior provides the tools that help in the understanding of these complexities and dynamics that enables informed decision-making and strategic planning.

The evidence remains that leaders can develop structures that promote innovation and responsiveness by applying the principles of organizational theory. Understanding behavioral dynamics allows for the cultivation of environments that empower employees,

enhancing engagement and performance. Ultimately, this foundational knowledge equips leaders with the insights needed to drive sustainable growth and resilience in their organizations. Therefore, organizational theory and behavior offers essential frameworks for understanding and navigating the complexities of organizational life. Leaders and policymakers can effectively guide their organizations through the challenges of an ever-changing environment using the interplay between structure, culture, and behavior that exist in organizations. As organizations continue to evolve, these insights will remain crucial in fostering adaptive, resilient, and high-performing teams. Fig. 1 provides us with a summary of the review and justifications.

2. METHODOLOGY

Literature and text analysis was employed because it is a critical method engaged to unpack and interpret the facts of this paper. The analytical process used involves examining the text language, structure, themes, and context of the downloaded materials that provides insights into its meaning and significance. The study employed various theoretical frameworks such as structuralism and post-structuralism analysts to uncover layers of meaning that may not be directly needed for this paper.

At the core of literature analysis is the close reading of the downloaded texts. This technique requires meticulous attention to details that

focuses on word choice, imagery, and their narrative style. The study analyzed literature and text on university websites concerning their PhD programs and the justifications and importance put forward for the inclusion of organizational theory and behavior in their leadership and policy. Such close readings often highlighted the relationship between form and content, by demonstrating how structure influences interpretation.

Contextual analysis is another essential component that was employed to be able to situate the text within the framework of this work. The literature and text analysis employed in this work is not merely an academic exercise; it allowed me to do critical thinking and greatly appreciate my experiences when making the final choice on which text to use and those to drop. A more profound connection to the literature and their capacity to reflect and shape the work were validated using Scott (2006) overlapping validity criteria vis-à-vis, authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning, guided my document selection.

3. RATIONALE FOR INCLUSION

3.1 The Interdisciplinary Approach of OTB

Organizational theory and behavior (OTB) is a field that examines the structure, dynamics, and behavior of organizations, offering insights that are crucial for the understanding of how organizations function and evolve. An interdisciplinary approach is essential because it integrates various academic disciplines to provide a more comprehensive understanding of organizations.

The interdisciplinary approach of OTB draws from sociology, psychology, economics, political science, management and leadership studies. Each of these disciplines offers a unique perspective that enhances our understanding of organizational dynamics. For example, sociology provides insights into social structures and group behaviors, which are essential for understanding how organizational cultures develop and how they influence individual behavior within the organization. Concepts such as norms, values, and group dynamics, derived from sociological theories, are critical in analyzing how teams function and how leadership affects organizational climate.

In psychology, which is another cornerstone of this interdisciplinary framework, contributes significantly to our understanding of individual and collective behavior within organizations. The psychological approach explores topics such as motivation, perception, decision-making, and personality. The psychological theories of motivation, such as Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, McGregor (1960) theory X and Y, and Herzberg's (1968) two-factor theory, offer valuable insights into employee engagement and job satisfaction. Applying the psychological principles, makes organizations develop strategies that enhances employee performance and well-being, which ultimately may lead to increased productivity and reduced turnover.

Economics also plays a vital role in OTB, particularly through its focus on resource allocation, incentives, and the behavior of individuals within economic systems. Theories of transaction cost economics help explain how organizations are structured to minimize costs and maximize efficiency. Understanding economic principles enables organizations to make informed decisions regarding resource management and strategic planning (Ololube, 2019), to guarantee that they remain competitive in an ever-changing market landscape.

Political science contributes to the interdisciplinary approach in OTB by examining power dynamics, influence, and decision-making processes within organizations. The concepts of authority, governance, and institutional behavior are crucial in understanding how organizations operate within social and political contexts. When the political structures within an organization are properly analyzed, practitioners and researchers can identify how power relations affect organizational behavior and outcomes, such as conflict resolution and collaboration.

Leadership, policy and management studies comprises elements from the aforementioned disciplines, provides a practical framework towards applying theoretical insights in organizations. It emphasizes the development of effective management practices, leadership and policy analysis styles, and organizational design (Agbor et al., 2023; Ololube, 2018b). Through case studies and empirical research, leadership and management scholars explore the practical implications of organizational theory in other to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

The interdisciplinary approach of OTB does not only enrich the theoretical understanding of organizations but it also promotes innovative solutions to complex organizational challenges. Through the synthesizing of insights from multiple disciplines, organizations may develop holistic approaches that evaluate various dimensions of their day-to-day operations.

3.2 The Contextual Approach of OTB

Organizational theory is the examination of how structures, cultures, and processes influence behavior within organizations. Various theories have emerged over time, from classical approaches, which emphasizes hierarchy and division of labor to contemporary perspectives and they focus on systems thinking and organizational culture. Each theory reflects the context in which it was developed, influenced by economic, social, and technological changes.

Early organizational theorists like Frederick Taylor in the early 20th century, emerged during the Industrial Revolution when efficiency and productivity were paramount. Taylor's (1911) Scientific Management emphasized the optimization of tasks and processes, which highlighted a mechanistic view of organizations. This approach, however, largely overlooked human factors that triggered the Human Relations Movement in the mid-20th century, which introduced a better understanding of employee motivation and the importance of interpersonal relationships. This shift was contextualized by changing workforce demographics and increasing recognition of the psychological needs of workers.

The relevance of organizational theory and behavior (OTB) context becomes even more pronounced in today's rapidly changing organizational landscapes. Globalization, technological advancements, and the shifting societal values compel organizations to adapt continually. Theories like contingency theory emerged in this context, which proposes that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to organizational structure or management. That is to say, effective strategies depend on various situational factors, such as the external environment, organizational size, and technology used.

Furthermore, the rise of the knowledge economy has necessitated a focus on organizational behavior as it pertains to collaboration, innovation, and agility. Organizations increasingly operate in networks, where traditional hierarchies give way to more fluid, team-based structures. This evolution has prompted scholars to explore concepts like organizational learning and change management, emphasizing how organizations can harness collective knowledge and foster adaptive cultures. The contextual understanding of these behaviors is crucial, as it recognizes that individual and group dynamics are influenced by external pressures and internal cultures.

The increasing importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace adds another layer of context to organizational behavior. Organizations are now tasked with creating environments that not only comply with legal standards but also promote a culture of belonging and respect. This shift reflects broader societal changes and has led to a re-examination of leadership styles, decision-making processes, and employee engagement strategies. As such, leaders must be equipped to navigate these difficulties, and recognizing that their actions are situated within a broader socio-cultural context of the organizations.

Thus, the contextual understanding of OTB is vital for grasping the intricacies of how organizations operate. Recognizing the influence of historical, economic, social, and technological factors, scholars and practitioners can develop more effective strategies for managing organizations. This understanding allows for a more holistic view of organizations, which emphasizes the interplay between structure, culture, and behavior that will ultimately lead to more resilient and adaptive organizations capable of thriving in an ever-changing world.

3.3 Evidence-Based Practice in OTB

Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) is a systematic approach that integrates the best available research evidence with practical expertise and stakeholder values to inform decision-making in organizations. It has gained significant traction in various fields, including healthcare, education, and business management. The application of EBP in organizational theory and behavior focuses on enhancing effectiveness, efficiency, and overall organizational performance.

EBP challenges traditional decision-making processes that often rely on anecdotal evidence or long-standing practices without a critical

evaluation of their effectiveness (Ololube, 2017). This approach emphasizes the need for organizations to be data-driven, employing empirical research findings to guide policies and practices.

One key aspect of EBP is its emphasis on the integration of research findings into organizational behavior. This is particularly relevant in understanding how individuals and groups function within organizations. Organizational behavior examines the dynamics of employee interactions, motivation, and performance, and EBP encourages leaders to apply scientific insights to foster a more productive workplace. For instance, applying research on motivation theories such as Herzberg et al. (1959) and Herzberg (1968) Two-Factor Theory or Deci and Ryan's (1985) and Ryan and Deci (2000), Self-Determination Theory helps organizations develop better incentive programs that enhance employee engagement and satisfaction.

Moreover, EBP promotes a culture of continuous improvement within organizations. By regularly reviewing and applying the latest research findings, organizations can adapt to changing environments and refine their practices accordingly. This adaptive approach is critical in today's fast-paced business landscape, where organizations must remain agile to respond to emerging challenges and opportunities. For example, evidence from organizational psychology can guide management practices, helping leaders to cultivate a supportive culture that encourages innovation and collaboration.

Another important dimension of EBP is the consideration of stakeholder perspectives. Successful organizations recognize that decisions should not only be based on data but also take into account the values and experiences of employees, customers, and other stakeholders. Involving stakeholders in the decision-making process not only enriches the evidence base but also fosters buy-in and commitment to organizational changes. This participatory approach enhances trust and accountability, essential components for a healthy organizational culture.

Additionally, EBP requires organizations to invest in training and development to ensure that employees possess the skills needed to interpret and utilize research effectively (Ololube et al., 2009). This capability is vital for creating a workforce that is both knowledgeable and adaptable. Organizations that prioritize training in research methodologies and critical thinking are better positioned to leverage EBP for strategic advantage.

EBP offers a valuable framework for enhancing organizational theory and behavior through making groundbreaking decision from empirical evidences. With this, organizations can improve employee engagement, raise a culture of continuous improvement, and adapt to the evolving business landscape. According to The Oxford Review (2023), EBP is not merely an improvement in the business world; it is a necessary evolution for organizations that aim to sustained success. The Oxford Review provided four sources of evidence for EBP (1. Research evidence - preferably peer reviewed research/scientific literature, 2. Work-based research (trial and error testing), 3. Feedback from the organization and customers / clients / stakeholders, and 4. Practitioner experience and expertise) as reflected in Fig. 2.

However, the implementation of EBP in organizational settings is not without challenges. Barriers such as resistance to change, lack of access to quality research, and insufficient management support can hinder the effective application of EBP. To overcome these obstacles, organizational leaders must foster an environment that values learning and encourages experimentation. Excellent leaders pave the way for a more informed and effective organizational culture by championing evidence-based approaches and demonstrating their impact on performance,

3.4 Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving in OTB

Critical thinking and problem-solving are essential skills in the study of organizational theory and behavior. In today's complex and dynamic business environment, organizations face multifaceted challenges that require thoughtful analysis and strategic decision-making. Understanding how these cognitive skills function within organizational settings can enhance effectiveness, foster innovation, and lead to better outcomes.

Critical thinking is the ability to analyze information, evaluate evidence, and synthesize insights to make informed decisions. In organizational contexts, this means looking

beyond surface-level issues to understand underlying causes and potential consequences. For instance, when a company experiences declining employee morale, critical thinking enables leaders to investigate the root causes— whether they be related to management practices, workload, or company culture—rather than simply addressing symptoms like increased turnover.

Incorporating critical thinking into organizational behavior studies allows for a deeper understanding of individual and group dynamics. According to Ololube (2017), applying frameworks such as the SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats), helps organizations to critically assess their internal capabilities and external

environment. This holistic view does not only aid in strategic planning but also empowers leaders and team members to identify opportunities for improvement and innovation (see Fig. 3).

Problem-solving is intrinsically linked to critical thinking. It involves applying analytical skills to develop effective solutions to organizational challenges. Effective problem-solving in organizations often follows a structured process: identifying the problem, gathering relevant information, generating potential solutions, evaluating alternatives, and implementing the best option. This methodical approach certifies that decisions made are based on data and sound reasoning rather than intuition or bias.
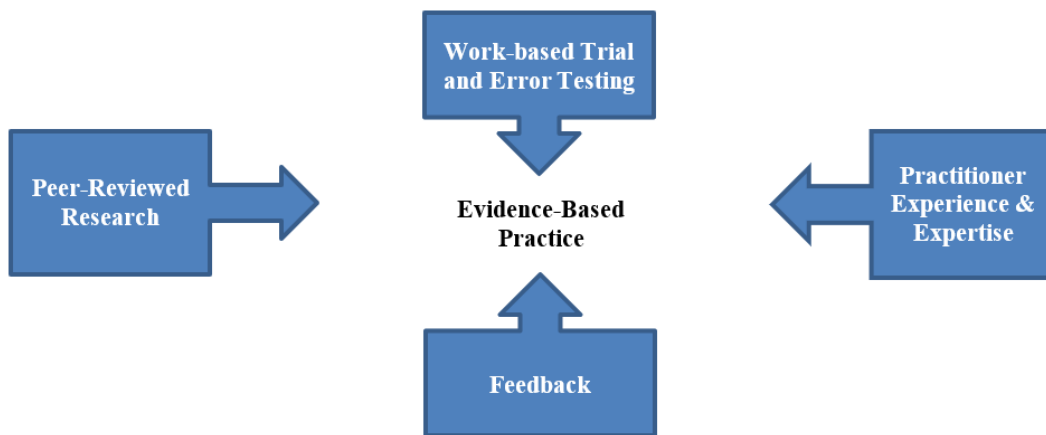

Fig. 2. The four sources of evidence for evidence-based practice
Source: https://oxford-review.com/evidence-based-practice-essential-guide/

Fig. 3. SWOT Analysis
Source: https://sonary.com/content/swot-analysis-understanding-strengths-weaknesses-opportunities-and-threats/

For instance, when facing operational inefficiencies, organizations can leverage data analytics to identify patterns and trends (Benjamin et al., 2024; Laursen & Thorlund, 2016; Nguyen et al., 2018; Ololube, 2024). Employing tools like process mapping and root cause analysis makes teams to pinpoint specific issues affecting productivity. This reliance on evidence-based practices fosters a culture of accountability and transparency, essential for sustainable growth.

The role of collaboration in critical thinking and problem-solving cannot be overstated. Organizations are made up of diverse teams with varying perspectives and expertise. Encouraging open dialogue and collaborative brainstorming sessions, organizations are able harness collective intelligence to tackle complex issues. The collaborative approach does not only enrich the problem-solving process but it also enhances team cohesion and trust. Furthermore, organizations that develop environment that values critical thinking and problem-solving have power to advance a culture of continuous improvement. In addition, organizations that promote experimentation and learn from failures encourage employees to think creatively and challenge the status quo.

Despite the clear benefits, organizations may encounter challenges in cultivating critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Ricci, 2014). The common difficulties encountered in organizations include entrenched mindsets, resistance to change, and a lack of training resources. To overcome these barriers, leadership plays a crucial role in modeling critical thinking behaviors and providing opportunities for skill development. Offering training programs focused on analytical reasoning, decision-making frameworks, and creative thinking empowers employees to become more effective problem-solvers.

3.5 Preparation for Professional Roles and Familiarity in OBT

In today's rapidly evolving work environment, preparation for professional roles and familiarity with organizational theory and behavior are crucial for success (Basten & Haamann, 2018). As organizations become more complex, understanding the dynamics that drive workplace interactions and decision-making is essential for both individual career advancement and organizational effectiveness.

Preparation for professional roles consists of a wide range of skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for effective functioning within an organization. This preparation often includes formal education, practical experience, and the development of soft skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving (Ololube, 2024). The knowledge of organizational theory and behavior provides a foundational understanding that can enhance one's ability to navigate workplace challenges.

Organizational theory explores the structures, processes, and cultures that characterize organizations. It examines how organizations are designed and how they operate, providing insights into the factors that influence employee behavior and organizational performance. Acquaintance with key concepts such as organizational structure, culture, and change management equips managers and leaders with the tools to analyze and improve organizational dynamics.

For instance, understanding different organizational structures such as hierarchical or matrix systems allows professionals to identify the most effective ways to communicate and collaborate within their teams. A flat organization might adopt open communication and rapid decision-making, while a hierarchical structure organization may require more formal channels and protocols. Identifying the differences role of flat organizations and hierarchical structured organizations, managers and leaders are at will to adapt their approaches to fit the specific organizational context (Ananyi & Ololube, 2023; Wajdi, 2017).

Moreover, knowledge of organizational behavior helps professionals anticipate and address potential challenges. Concepts such as motivation, leadership styles, and group dynamics play a critical role in shaping employee engagement and performance. For example, familiarity with motivation theories, such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs or Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, can inform managers on how to create environments that stand-in motivation and satisfaction among employees.

Preparation for professional roles also involves developing emotional intelligence, which is increasingly recognized as a vital skill in the workplace (Landry, 2019; Coronado-Maldonado & Benítez-Márquez, 2023). Emotional

intelligence encompasses self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills, all of which contribute to effective communication and collaboration. In an organizational setting, managers and leaders who possess high emotional intelligence are often better equipped to navigate interpersonal conflicts, inspire teams, and lead with empathy (Landry, 2019; Sindell & Sindell, 2024).

That is to say, leaders must be emotionally intelligent for them to be able to lead effectively and guide their team members and the organizations. When real-world experiences are incorporated, such as internships or cooperative education, professional preparation allows managers and leaders to apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings. The experiences provided by the opportunities to observe organizational behavior directly, makes it possible to engage with diverse teams, and confront real-world challenges. Reflecting on these experiences enhances the understanding of organizational dynamics, which prepares leaders and manager to fulfill future roles.

Furthermore, the continuous development of skills and knowledge is essential in a landscape marked by technological advancements and shifting workplace norms. Professionals must remain adaptable and committed to lifelong learning. Engaging with current research, attending workshops, and participating in professional networks can deepen familiarity with organizational theory and behavior, ensuring that individuals stay relevant and effective in their roles (Ololube, 2011).

4. EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE / CLAIMS ON OTB'S BENEFITS IN PHD ELP PROGRAMS

Inconceivably, several Google and other search engines examinations on relevant studies that pertain to the theme of this work yielded no direct link. However, some studies close to this work were highlighted.

Hallinger and Heck (1996) in their meta-analysis review studies on the role of the institutional leader's effectiveness emphasized the importance of organizational behavior in organizational management. The study suggested that understanding organizational behavior is essential for leaders in educational settings.

Elmore (2000) in his study discussed how leadership and organizational behavior theories should inform educational leadership, particularly in relation to reforms. He advocated for the integration of OTB into leadership development programs for effective improvement.

Bush and Glover (2003) in their study examined the role of leadership in institutional improvement by linking leadership behavior and organizational theory. They discussed how institutional leadership programs should incorporate knowledge of organizational behavior to train future leaders in fostering positive school cultures and achieving successful reforms.

Marzano et al. (2005) in their study focused on evidence-based leadership practices that highlight how understanding organizational behavior is critical to effective leadership. The authors emphasized that future leaders should be equipped with knowledge of organizational dynamics to drive positive change.

Hoy and Tarter (2004) study explored the concept of organizational justice and its impact on institutional effectiveness. They argued that leaders must understand organizational justice and behavior to create a fair and effective environment, which justifies its inclusion in ELP training.

Leithwood and Jantzi (2007) study examined how transformational leadership as a component of organizational theory, affects institutional outcomes. The authors argued that leadership behaviors influence both the culture and climate of organizations and institutions, which justifies the need for leadership programs to incorporate OTB principles.

Hoy and Miskel (2008) in their book provided a comprehensive review of educational administration theories, including organizational theory and behavior. The book outlines how these theories shape educational practices and why PhD programs in educational leadership must include this content for effective leadership training.

Bush (2009) reviewed key theories of leadership and organizational behavior in education. The paper argued that understanding organizational structures, culture, and behavior is essential for future leaders. This underlines the very essence for organizational behavior content to be included in PhD programs in ELP.

Schein (2010) evaluated the connection between organizational culture with leadership effectiveness, by highlighting the significance of these concepts in training future leaders to manage institutions effectively.

Salas et al. (2012) in their work explored the relationship between organizational learning and effectiveness. They posited that workforce must understand both organizational theory and behavior to lead effectively. Therefore, organizations must understand that training and development helps to remain competitive when they continually educate their employees. Thus, this knowledge should be part of PhD programs in ELP.

Fiedler (2015) in his article explored how contingency theory, which focuses on the relationship between leadership and organizational context, provides useful insights for leadership and should be incorporated into training and development programs in educational leadership and policy.

Northouse's (2015) synthesized empirical research on leadership theories and their application in organizational contexts by stating that the inclusion of the theories in leadership programs is discussed in terms of preparing future leaders for the challenges of managing and leading organizations.

Fullan (2020) discussed the importance of organizational change theory in leadership and policy. The argument is that programs must include such content to equip future institutional leaders with the tools to manage and lead systemic reform.

Day and Sammons (2020) in their study emphasized the importance of organizational learning and behavior for the development of leadership competencies. They argued that study programs should include these frameworks to prepare leaders for systemic change.

Leithwood (2021) in a recent study examined how different organizational behavior theories, including transformational and transactional leadership, impact the leadership practices of school leaders and advocates for incorporating such theories in programs.

Toprak (2020) investigated the leadership in education by systematically reviewing training for educational leaders. The study demonstrated how the application of the theory enhances decision-making and institutional reform processes.

Ang'ana and Kilika (2022) examined how the collaborative leadership presents a case for the development of a theoretical framework that is suitable for the expansion of the understanding of deployment of collaboration in leadership in organizational context, especially in terms of interpersonal relationships, motivation, and organizational development.

Lovett et al. (2023) in a recent study applied adaptive leadership theory to the educational context, and maintained that understanding organizational behavior is essential for candidates in educational leadership to navigate complex challenges in education systems.

Kettunen et al. (2023) in their case study investigated how institutionalization of competition in higher education is applied in institutional leadership and the impact they have on institutional improvement and leadership practices.

Adeniyi et al (2024) explored how organizational culture impacts the leadership styles and behaviors of organizational leaders and proposed that understanding these cultural dynamics is critical for effective leadership.

All these studies and books collectively emphasized the significance of organizational theory and behavior in shaping effective leadership. The evidence supports the idea that future leaders need a strong grounding in these concepts to manage complex and challenging organizations to drive positive organizational change.

5. SOME KEY ORGANIZATIONAL THEORIES AND BEHAVIORS FOR LEADERSHIP AND POLICY

5.1 The Classical Theory (Max Weber 1908)

The Classical Theory, particularly as articulated by Max Weber in 1908 (Ololube, 2024), provides a foundational framework for the understanding and bureaucracy, organizational structure, social organizations and their authorities. Weber, who is a prominent sociologist, emphasized the role of rationality in shaping modern society. His analysis focused on three ideal types of

authority: traditional, charismatic, and legal-rational.

Weber's emphasis on legal-rational authority is particularly relevant in contemporary policy environments. This form of authority underpins bureaucratic structures, highlighting the importance of rule-based governance and institutional legitimacy. In an age where effective leadership demands accountability and transparency, recognizing the role of bureaucratic processes can enhance policy implementation and organizational efficiency.

Furthermore, Weber's exploration of bureaucracy serves as a foundation for analyzing modern institutions. The understanding the complexities of the bureaucratic systems helps in developing strategies for the navigation and improvement of institutional frameworks and ensuring that policies are effectively translated into action. Additionally, the interplay between charismatic and traditional authority in leadership contexts helps postgraduate students appreciate the dynamics of influence and motivation, and the awareness is significant in fashioning policies that reverberate with diverse stakeholders.

5.2 Human Relations Theory (Elton Mayo, 1933)

Elton Mayo (1933) in Britannica (2024) is primarily associated with the Human Relations Theory, which emphasized the significance of the social relationships between employee well-being and organizational effectiveness. Mayo's work, particularly during the Hawthorne Studies

between 1924 and 1932, highlighted how psychological and social factors influence worker productivity. He argued that attention directed at employee needs, motivation, and group dynamics may possibly lead to improved performance. He was able to shift the focus from purely the mechanistic approaches to a more holistic understanding of workplace interactions. Three factors brought about the Human Relations Movement (see Fig. 4).

Understanding Human Relations Theory equips postgraduate students in leadership and policy as well as future leaders with the skills to nurture positive workplace cultures and prioritize employee engagement. In this current and rapidly evolving leadership and policy landscape, the human element is essential in crafting effective organizational strategies and lays the foundation for success (Amanchukwu et al., 2015; Ololube, 2024).

Mayo's emphasis on communication and interpersonal relationships stresses the importance of building trust and collaboration among team members. This is particularly relevant for leaders and policymakers who must navigate diverse stakeholder interests to promote inclusive decision-making processes. Mayo's theories provides framework for the development of empathetic leadership styles that resonate with employees. In summary, Human Relations Theory offers PhD students crucial perspectives on the human aspects of leadership and policy, enabling them to create environments conducive to innovation and collaboration.
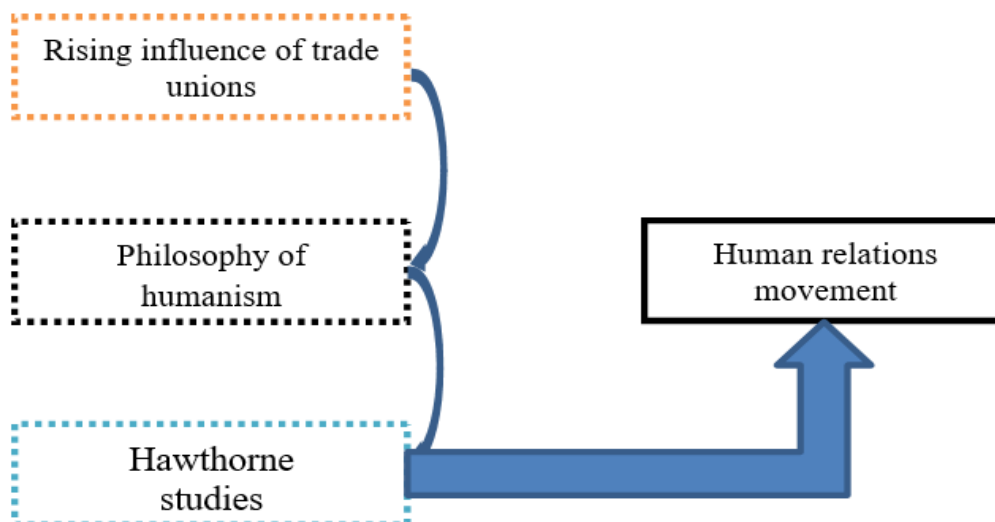

Fig. 4. Sources of human relations movement. Adapted from Naylor (1999, p. 43)

5.3 Contingency Theory (Paul Lawrence & Jay Lorsch, 1967)

Contingency theory was first developed by Fred Fiedler (1964). Fiedler's contingency theory of leadership suggests that the effectiveness of a leader is contingent on the match between the leader's leadership style and some specific situational variables. Other notable contributors to the contingency theory include Paul Lawrence and Jay Lorsch (1967) who applied contingency theory to organizational design. Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) believed that organizational effectiveness is contingent upon its alignment with the organization's structure and the environment. This theory emphasized that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to management, rather, the optimal organizational strategy to be adopted must adapt to specific contextual variables, such as industry dynamics, technology, and the market conditions.

Contingency Theory is particularly significant to postgraduate students in leadership and policy because it encourages a clear understanding of organizational behavior, which future leaders and practitioners must recognize that effective organizational strategies are context-dependent. The adaptability of this theory is essential for addressing the different challenges and opportunities that arise in organizational settings.

Moreover, Lawrence and Lorsch's work highlighted the importance of differentiation and integration within organizations, and understanding how to balance the elements that allows leaders to craft policies that enhance collaboration across departments while still in control of the unique operational needs of the organization. In applying the Contingency Theory, postgraduate students in practice can develop a flexible leadership style that responds to the specific demands of various situations. This approach does not only care for resilience, but also promotes innovative solutions tailored to distinct challenges.

5.4 Institutional Theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983)

DiMaggio and Powell (1983) articulated the Institutional Theory. They explored how organizations conform to social norms and structures to gain legitimacy and stability. The theory identified the three mechanisms of isomorphism: coercive, mimetic, and normative. Coercive isomorphism arises from external pressures, such as regulations, mimetic isomorphism occurs when organizations emulate successful peers, and normative isomorphism stems from professional standards and practices.

Institutional Theory as propounded by DiMaggio and Powell is crucial for the understanding of how external influences shape organizational behavior and decision-making. When these dynamics are recognizing, it enables future leaders to traverse the complexities of institutional environments, thereby enhancing their ability to implement effective policies.

The theory also highlights the importance of legitimacy in leadership by building credibility and trust within organizations and with stakeholders for successful policy advocacy. The theory helps leaders and practitioners to understand how institutions operate and evolve to better strategize their approaches to influence change. Institutional Theory emphasizes on the role of collaboration and networking in leadership and policy by engaging with various institutions. Leaders that leverage on collective knowledge and resources have the potentials to better address societal challenges. DiMaggio and Powell's Institutional Theory provides valuable insights leaders and equipping them to lead effectively in complex policy environments.

5.5 Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory (Jay Barney, 1991)

The Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory, developed by Barney (1991) posited that an organization's unique resources and capabilities are fundamental to achieving competitive advantage and superior performance. RBV emphasizes that not all resources are created equal; instead, valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN) resources can lead to sustained success. The perspective as proposed by the RBV shifts the focus from the external market conditions to the internal strengths of an organization.

RBV Theory is essential for understanding how effective resource management can drive strategic decision-making, which has encourages leaders and will motivate future leaders to assess and leverage their organization's unique assets, be it human capital, technological innovations, or organizational culture to develop impactful policies and initiatives. Furthermore, RBV has over the years highlighted the importance of strategic alignment by identifying the interplay

between resources and organizational goals. Leaders and policymakers can skillfully craft policies that optimize resource utilization that can lead to enhanced operational efficiency and effectiveness. Ultimately, Barney's Resource-Based View provides critical framework for evaluating and enhancing organizational strengths, equipping them to lead effectively in dynamic environments. Fig. 5 conceptualized RBV.

5.6 Strength-Based Leadership (SBL) Theory (Rath & Conchie, 2008)

Strength-based leadership (SBL) theory began to take shape in the early 2000s by building on the broader strength-based approach developed by Donald O. Clifton and the Gallup Organization. Clifton's work, particularly his development of the Clifton StrengthsFinder (now called CliftonStrengths), was first introduced in 1999, which laid the groundwork for this approach. The theory gained significant traction and recognition with the publication of books such as "StrengthsFinder 2.0" by Gallup (2007). The popularization of the idea of focusing on individual strengths and applying them in leadership and organizational contexts was encouraged. Since then, the strength-based approach has become a prominent concept in leadership and management practices (Rath & Conchie, 2008).

According to Clifton and Harter (2003), SBL promotes collaboration and engagement, as leaders encourage team members to utilize their unique skills and talents. BSL is employed to cultivate a culture of appreciation and recognition, and organizational leaders adapt the

SBL to boost employees' morale and motivation for increased productivity (Seligman, 2002). On the whole, SBL does not only enhance individual satisfaction and growth but it also drives innovation and resilience within organizations, making it a valuable framework for modern leadership practices.

6. THE BENEFITS OF OTB ON PHD GRADUATES

6.1 Comprehensive Knowledge

Organizational theory and behavior provides PhD graduates with a deep understanding of how organizations function. This knowledge encompasses various frameworks that explain dynamics such as power structures, communication patterns, and cultural influences. With this comprehensive insight, graduates are better equipped to analyze complex organizational environments and anticipate challenges that will enable them to approach situations with a well-rounded perspective.

6.2 Informed Decision-Making

A strong foundation in organizational theory allows graduates to make informed decisions based on empirical evidence and theoretical insights. Understanding behavioral dynamics helps in recognizing how individual and group behaviors impact organizational outcomes. This awareness enables graduates to implement data-driven strategies and adapting their decisions to align with both organizational goals and employee needs to foster a more effective and supportive workplace.

Fig. 5. Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory. Source: Utami and Alamanos (2023)

6.3 Strategic Leadership

PhD graduates that are equipped with knowledge of organizational behavior can become strategic leaders who inspire and guide their teams effectively. They can leverage their understanding of motivation, team dynamics, and leadership styles to cultivate an environment of collaboration and innovation. This strategic approach enhances their ability to align organizational objectives with team capabilities, which will ultimately driving success.

6.4 Policy Effectiveness

For those involved in policy-making, a grasp of organizational theory is crucial for crafting effective policies that consider the complexities of human behavior within organizations. Understanding how organizational structures and cultures influence policy implementation, graduates will be able to design initiatives that are more likely to gain support and achieve desired outcomes that will enhance the overall effectiveness of policies.

6.5 Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving skills

OTB provides the frameworks for the understanding of how organizations function, which enhances graduates critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Graduates that are exposed to learn how to analyze different organizational structures and how they impact and modify employees' behavior and decision-making helps them think critically about the effectiveness of the various approaches that lay the foundation for organizational success (Ololube, 2024). Also, studying the group dynamics, power relations, and communication patterns of organizations supports graduates identify the underlying issues and they can devise strategies to address them.

6.6 Psychological Skills

Organizational theory and behavior significantly contribute to the development of the psychological skills of PhD graduates in several ways—it provides insights into how employees' and group behaviors affect organizational dynamics. This knowledge supports graduates to understand patterns of motivations, emotions, and interpersonal relationships. The study of organizational culture and behavior patterns empowers graduates to enhance their emotional intelligence through the recognition of their own emotions and those of others for effective teamwork and leadership. Above all, organizational theory and behavior often expose graduates to strategies of organizational conflict and dispute resolution.

6.7 Professional Versatility

The insights gained from studying organizational theory and behavior equips PhD graduates with versatile skills applicable across various sectors. Whether in the academia, corporate settings, or public service, the ability to analyze and influence organizational dynamics is invaluable. This versatility enables graduates to adapt to different roles and challenges that make them more competitive in the job market and enhances their capacity for impactful leadership.

7. CONCLUSION

This review has been able to do a relative justification for the inclusion of organizational theory and behavior (OTB) in PhD program in educational leadership and policy (ELP). The inclusion of OTB in PhD programs in ELP is essential for preparing effective leaders capable to sail across the complexities of contemporary organizational environments. This field equips postgraduate students with a comprehensive understanding of how organizations operate and allowing them to analyze and influence the dynamics within institutions and organizations, through making informed decisions for strategic leadership. OTB has been justified to be able to empower future leaders to create supportive and innovative institutional cultures.

In addition, the application of organizational theory enhances policy effectiveness by ensuring that initiatives are grounded in a thorough understanding of human behavior and organizational dynamics. This orientation increases the likelihood of organizational managers and leaders to successfully implement and achieve positive outcomes. Furthermore, the skills acquired by studying organizational theory and behavior promotes professional resourcefulness that enable graduates to adopt and adapt to various roles in organizations, right from administrative and management positions to policy advocacy. As the organizational landscapes continue to change, the insights gained from this area of study are invaluable in developing adaptive, responsive leaders that can address the challenges faced in today's business

world. Consequently, defending the inclusion of organizational theory and behavior in PhD programs in leadership and policy is not only justified but crucial to foster impactful institutional and organizational leadership.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

The following recommendations are made for further program development:

- Universities should incorporate organizational theory and behavior courses into the core curriculum for all university wide courses.
- Universities should ensure faculty members have organizational theory and behavior expertise.
- Universities should encourage more research on organizational theory and behavior applications in leadership and policy.
- Universities should provide opportunities for practical application through internships, consultancy projects or case studies.
- Universities should foster partnerships with organizational theory and behavior scholars.
- Universities should encourage more PhD programs in leadership and policy that can effectively integrate organizational theory and behavior by enhancing graduate outcomes and preparing leaders and policymakers for success.

9. DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The future research on justifying the inclusion of OTB in PhD programs in educational leadership and policy could focus on understanding how these disciplines influence leadership effectiveness, decision-making, and organizational challenges and change. Scholars should investigate the relationship between organizational theory, organizational behavior, and their outcomes, putting into consideration their impact on leadership, policy and performance. Additionally, researchers could explore the integration of organizational theory into curriculum design, leadership training, and policy development. Several empirical studies that demonstrates the tangible benefits of the inclusion of OTB in educational institutions and

policy implementation could provide more compelling evidences for its value in doctoral programs.

DISCLAIMER (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)

Author(s) hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc.) and text-to-image generators have been used during the writing or editing of this manuscript.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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Peer-review history:
The peer review history for this paper can be accessed here:
https://prh.ikprress.org/review-history/12538